

Nellis receives Tree City USA Award; sixth consecutive year



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Nellis celebrated Earth and Arbor Day together at Freedom Park, April 12. Kicking off the event, Mr. John Jones, Nevada Division of Forestry's regional manager, awarded Col. Robert C. Lynn, 99th Air Base Wing vice commander, the Tree City USA Award for 1999.

As the recipient of this award, Nellis was given a Tree City USA flag to fly here. In addition to the flag, three trees were planted in Freedom Park to support Arbor Day.

"I am very excited that this special award was earned by Nellis Air Force Base six years in a row," said Mr. Jones. "That's pretty outstanding."

Four requirements must be met for organizations to be honored with the award. Recipients must have a committee that informs the public about trees, established guidelines that outline the care and maintenance of trees and Arbor Day has to be observed formally. The final work plan calls for allocating two dollars for every community member to fund environmental improvements.

"We have a base tree board committee for our planting and forestry programs to ensure that the right trees are planted for the environment," said Ms. Alma Alanis-Marlin, outreach program coordinator for Environmental Flight. "It's great that the Nellis community fully supports both Earth Day and Arbor Day."

The theme of Earth Day was recycle, reduce and reuse. Finalists for the children's Earth Day poster contest were awarded and the works displayed for viewing. "We wanted to get the children involved by having a poster contest," said Ms. Marlin. "The results

of the contest were of such high standard that next year we will have the children compete in the national contest for Earth Day."

The fair consisted of booths set up around Freedom Park exhibiting ways of improving the environment. Exhibitors included Nevada Power, Nellis recycling, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and Las Vegas National History Museum.

"It's a terrific time to inform and encourage Earth and Arbor Day," said Col. Lynn. "I want to stress the importance of the three 'R's': reduce, reuse and recycle to all Nellis community members."

The first proclamation of Earth Day began in San Francisco, the City of Saint Francis, patron saint of ecology. This designated March 21, 1970, the first day of spring to be Earth Day. Earth Day is now firmly established for the future as an annual event to increase awareness and concern for life on our planet.

In 1872, J. Sterling Morton first proposed a tree-planting holiday to be called "Arbor Day" to the Nevada Board of Agriculture. Nebraska Gov. Robert W. Furnas officially proclaimed Arbor Day March 12, 1874 and the day itself was first observed April 8, 1874.

It was estimated that more than 1 million trees were planted in Nebraska on the first Arbor Day. Today the most common date for the state observances is the last Friday in April.



Mr. Paul Frederick, education director of the Las Vegas national museum holds a South American Redtail boa-constrictor at the fair.



Photos by Airman 1st Class James T. May III



Top, from left to right Mr. John Jones, Nevada Division of Forestry, Col. Robert Lynn, 99th ABW vice commander, Lt. Col. Larry D. Johnson, 99th Support Group deputy commander, and Ms. Karen Davis, Lomie Heard G. Elementary School teacher, plant the first of three trees to kick off the days events.

Left, Sparky the fire dog poses with Ms. Kimberlee's 4th grade class from Lomie Heard Elementary School. The Earth Day Fair consisted of booths set up around Freedom Park exhibiting ways of improving the environment. Sparky was only one of many themes designed to get children involved.

Right, a 3rd grader from Lomie Heard Elementary School gets a taste of a millipede crawling up her arm during the festivities recently.

